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UNCLAS YEREVAN 002804

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: ARMENIAN PRESIDENT SIGNS ALTERNATIVE MILITARY
SERVICE LAW

REF: YEREVAN 2545

[1](#)1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

[1](#)2. (SBU) President Robert Kocharian signed legislation December 28 that establishes a system of alternatives to military service in Armenia. The National Assembly began work on this legislation at the end of 2003 at the urging of the Council of Europe and passed it in its final form November 23 of this year (reftel). The Ministry of Justice can now adjudicate the roughly 20 applications received from Fall 2004 draftees. The ministry expects to complete the adjudication process in early February, before spring military training begins. Under the law, draftees can apply for civil service such as work in a hospital or alternative military service, which excludes handling weapons. Applicants must show that they are members of an established pacifist group in order to qualify for one of the alternatives to military service.

RICHTER